

[When You Live Like I Done]

Jul [??]

WHEN YOU LIVE LIKE I DONE

When you live like I done people give you a line all the time, all day long wherever you're at. All day long, everybody's givin everybody else a line, and after a while without thinkin much about it one way or another, just trying to get along you know, there you are givin somebody a line just like everyone else is doin - only what you're really doin is just givin yourself a line I guess, 'cause nobody is listenin to anybody else these days anyhow, everybody's just talkin to hisself in a way. Like my boy-friend Katz used to comment, whenever you think you're screwin somebody take a look around and you'll see it's just you gettin screwed as usual same as always. So you got to be real careful. You got to lie to everybody, you can't believe nobody - but still sometimes you got to believe something that somebody says, but most of all you got to lie to yourself. That's the main thing. Sometimes you can take a chance and talk straight to somebody else - but when you live like I done you can't ever stop kidding yourself a second or you're through. It'd just take all the heart out of you, you'd get blind drunk and blow your top. So you got to be more careful. What you say to yourself even more than what you say to cops and doctors.

I went into a house on 18th and Indiana, that was in prohibition years. Then over into the big one on 22nd and [Wabash?] - that 2 used to be the Four Deuces you know - then over to 19th and Dearborn. After that I got transferred to the Paris - that's the Paris Hotel I mean, on South State, and then around the corner to the Best. The Best Hotel I mean, - you know, Van Buren and Plymouth Court, around there, they call it the Harvey now. Just like they painted up the front of the old Revere House and call it the Hubbard. I was in the Best when I got sick. I been on the bum ever since I got no money to go to a real hospital, and I know what they do to you in the County. They give you the black bottle.

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All at once I owed everybody and I couldn't figure out why. They charge you four times over for everything. You got to pay for the towels, for the music, for the lifebuoy, for the guys who stay overtime, for guys who lose money somewhere else and think they lost it in your outfit, for the high-school kids who come up with two dollars even and carfare and then forget and put a nickel in the slot machine. Then you got to give them carfare, you got to pay off the doc who finds out you're sick, a sawbuck just to let you off, a fin to the bondsman when the house is [pinched?] - and still you aren't really sure you want to get out. Even when some duke tells you about some job in a big office, you don't try for it. You got no heart for it.

We all know what kinds of jobs girls like us get anyhow. Twelve hours a day for six dollars a week at Goldblatt's maybe. I can make that in six minutes, sick as I am, and I don't feel I'm making a fool of myself any more one way than another: I'll have a house of my own someday, managing one that is, keeping an eye on things, seeing that the girls stay sober and the drunks don't cause trouble, being able to think faster than cops and doctors and such. I'll go to work maybe for some Jew with a dozen houses and draw down sixty-five a week because I got experience and I can think so fast. Say, I know the city and every night sergeant in it and all the ins and outs. And the dame who went to work for eight or twelve bucks a week, all she's getting now is fifteen, if she's still got a job at all, and I'll bet she looks like a wreck besides, worried all the time and more than likely got a couple kids and a drunken bum in a room somewhere to take care of. I bet she expects every day to get fired - and who cares if she does or not? She knows that too. But take me now, I've got friends, people I've gotten out of jail, people I've loaned money to, women whose bills I paid, guys that I perjured myself for [?] I could go to any one of them tonight, they wouldn't ask no questions, just give me how much I asked for. But I don't figure I'm down that far yet. I figure I got myself into this, I can get myself out. That's how I always figure.

It aint women like me ends up an the street, no sirree. It's the department store dames who put in twenty years and then get the gate that end up that way, not us girls who been

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outsmartin doctors and coppers since we was maybe fourteen - fifteen years old. I'll tell you something you maybe don't know now. The old bags holdin 4 thereselves up by the bar-rail at 4 A.M. and cussin out the law when they're fifty years old and go jumpin off roofs or the [Municipal?] [Pier?] and crazy stuff like that - them's the ones been livin honest all their lives. My kind got a little business of her own somewhere, raisin chickens maybe, goin to church regular as clockwork and raisin her sister's kids or maybe one or two of her own - and raisin em right, so nobody don't make suckers of them.

I don't mean it's no bed of roses. It's bad alright, but it aint no worse, take it all in all, nor no better neither, than the next racket that girls without folks or schoolin can get into. When a girl got nobody who cares and she got to quit school after 4th grade like I done, it don't matter much what line she goes into, she ends up pretty much the same way every time. Whether she hires out to cook some college-dame's meals and scrub her [??] or run a [?] in a bar or tap backs in a shoe factory, she's bound to take a beating in the end. The smartest just take it lying down. You last longer that way.

I don't believe in women going to church before they're forty. It's smart to be a sucker than people take care of an old fool, but they just gang up on a young one. That's 'cause a young one still got something to give o'course, but a old one got nothin left.

What happens next? Oh, almost anything. Some bookkeeper comes along, say, takes you out a couple times, throws money right and left, you take an apartment with him. The next morning somebody starts 5 knocking, early. Who's there? Police. Your man's an embezzler, and if you got no smart mouthpiece to clear you, up you go as an accessory. Then it's the same thing all over again: somebody outside buys your parole and you owe him half your life when you get out. Back into a house then, if you can still get in one. If you can't find friends right off and you're flat, - well, I just hang around under the 22nd street El until I got enough to rent a room for a week on Indiana and picked up what I could, without protection or anything.

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A room - you know. Any room. It's all the same, it's not yours anyhow. It's a Jew undertaker's one hour, a [?] office-boy's the next. Then it belong to some pimple-faced punk hitchhiking to Hollywood - "you really think I look like George Raft?" he asks you. Or a Swede milkman just coming off duty and his horse waiting for him downstairs. He'll show you the horse from the window. "See him. That's Old Ned. He took a prize once at the stock show. If it snow he'll feel warmer." So it don't matter, so far as your own self goes, whether it's a fancy place on the near north side or a [dump spam-clean?] or filthy as a slophouse. It aint your anyhow. You keep it clean just because some of them might no come back if you don't. And that's funny - they all want it to be clean. Can you feature that? They maybe come from some dump that aint been swept in a month and the back of his neck that greasy it's enough to make you pop your cookies. But he want you to be clean, and the bed to be clean, and 6 the room to be clean - say, would you believe it, some of them wont even stand for you talkin dirty. They'll tell you you're too nice a girl to be usin such language. Did you ever hear anything like it in your life? Have you got any idea now crazy people are? Men, I mean? Do you know they'll do anything, absolutely anything? Even the weakest, the most foolish of them. Last night I heard the couple next door having a argument. The partitions 're pretty thin in these places, I can hear every word they say, all the time. They're not home home most the time. They were arguing because he thought he had won a 26-game downstairs but the girl had cheated him and his wife hadn't been watching or something. He thought she should of kept track of his tosses. He was on her neck about it the whole they were undressing for bed, and after a while I heard her crawl into bed - she sleeps on this side, by the wall - and him still nagging, like he was standing by the window looking down into the street and thinking up things to hurt her, like why don't she let her face come to a head and lance it. She has trouble with her skin, why he said that. After while though It got real quiet, I was in bed myself and could her breathing, she fell off to sleep right off and him still talking to hissself over by the window, trying to get hissself as sore as he really wanted to be. When he couldn't make it he got sore for real, he must of just walked past the bed, reached over and busted her spam in the mouth, and her sound asleep like that. Can you imagine anything

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like that? She 7 showed me the next day, two of her choppers were loose and she was still jittery, like anyone would be, being woke up with a poke in the jaw that way.

She said even before she got awake she was out of bed tryin to get her hands on him, - not knowin was she dreamin yet or was it real-just like instinct like animals you know- and he got a real bang out of her doin that, some reason. She ruined her only white nightgown, too, she said, it got blooded up all down the front from her choppers knocked loose.

I suppose that was about the only think could make him feel good- he just scooted off down the hall to make a night of it then, and she went back to bed and rolled and tossed until I knocked on the wall and asked her couldn't she sleep, she should come in my room I couldn't sleep either. So she come over in that blooded up nightgown, -it looked like it hadn't been washed for a month anyhow- and just set there and wipe her teeth on her sleeve once a while and tell me she don't know what's getting into her Harry, he didn't used to be like this.

And that's the kind of thing you're supposed to keep yourself clean and nice for, like your room is supposed to smell like flowers for. Well, there's only one kind that I ever met, and that's the bad kind, Harry aint no better nor worse than the next one, they're all the same. A [?] come in the other night dressed fit to kill, a big good-looking guy, and a longside him a little shabby guy, like his office boy. The big fellow wanted an awful lot and waved money around and 8 treated the little fellow like so much dirt, making him pick up pennies off the floor like he was a monkey or something. I felt sorry for the little fellow, but I didn't say nothing till he was alone a minute, then he told me, the big guy's money was counterfeit. And sure enough, he give me a twenty-dollar bill and wants sawbuck back[!?] I said I aint got it and he said he'd cash the twenty downstairs then, and I went out the back and told the landlady to call a cop. Of course he was gone when I got back upstairs. A [hackie?] caught up with him though, pulling the same [a?] not three blocks down the street, and got him tossed in the [tub?]. Then it turns out the big guy's dough was good all the time, it's just a little racket them two worked up to fleece whores and such, and [so e's?] suing the

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cab company for false arrest[.?] No, he wont collect. That hackie'll kill them both if they don't [get?] out of the neighborhood though, and there aint a cop around who wont lend him a hand, either. Cops are awful down on that kind. They don't bother my kind much.

You'd think Fellas would be the one to remember a girl, wouldn't you? I mean the [ellas?] being the one who's having all the fun, and her just seein one right after another all night long, it seems like he'd remember what she looked like better than she'd remember him. It aint that way though, it's the other way around. Ye think I forgot one single fella? Say, I could recognize them from six years back I bet, and the dutchman who was up here last night wound't know me from Hedy La Marr right now I bet. I'll tell you why that is, I figured it out. It's because they're all alike, and they're all 9 different, and you can't forget one of them because you have to get the best of him as soon as he come in the room and takes off his cap. And nobody don't forget anybody that they got to get the best of.

This 19th and Dearbor territory, that's been my territory for years, even before I got on the bum. Say, I know every window every alley, every bust-out lamp, every car-line, every newsboy, every cigar store, every cop, every [?] - say, I even notice where somebody tossed out a cigarette against a wall and the next day the wind has blew the snipe into the middle of the street. I've walked this corner at 4 am and 4 pm, summer and winter, sick and well, blind drunk and stone sober, sometimes so hungry I'd have to walk slow so [?] to fold up the pavement and it pulled in, and once with a month's rent paid [?] and thirty dollars in a purse under my arm.

I took that off a halfwit kid used to follow me around, and it turned out he stole it off his ole lady. God, I've met guys who wanted things. You couldn't think people outside of a crazy house would think of.

"Then there's the madam, who steals and cheats and keeps track of your comings and goings and has the key to your room. You leave it with her when you go downstairs for a coke, and [you?] ask her for it, real polite-like, when you come back up.

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There was Carlson, who owned the house and acted like I was dirt under his feet in daytime and come grinning like a cat at me as soon as it got dark out. There was Pritikin the delicatessen owner, who overcharged me day in and day out for over year and then wouldn't so much as recognise me as on the street. Say, don't think I don't remember them kind. There was Stash, a Polack cop when I was on 22nd, he'd pull me in if I didn't slip him a fin, and [Hax?] - he was just a sort of old guy run a elevator daytimes in the loop somewheres - he'd always be hangin around in the back booth at John O'Connor's tavern waitin for me to get pie-eyed so he could get some bouncer guy to get my purse or get me off somewheres where they could both get their way with me for a while after I'd passed out. He used to tell the younger guy he was my husband and we [?????]. O'Connor's was the only place on 22nd where my credit was good, I guess John liked me because I was Irish too. [??] didn't care, I couldn't even get pie-eyed, in peace there account that old elevator man. He wouldn't even let me [????]. He wouldn't even let me get drunk all by myself.

I wouldn't [??] but I got to have [?] whether I want him or not, [?????] on like I am. I'd [?] [thro?] [?????] around somewheres. [?] went [?] no [unprotected?] woman, out on a source I mean, unless they're scared [??] is Abe Lite, is real name is Abe [?] be used to be a [re ler?] up at [?] fronto once a while and [they?] called [?] chief [?] than and he have to ear [???] night.

[????]. So long as there's enough for hamburgers an [??] don't care for [nothin?] [He's twice?] the [man?] I've seen other women get stuck with - them nasty little fairy kind, they're 11 just like them little dors that [me just meant?] the people who food [?] as they are to strangers, - but ran quick with their fists. [?] a little [?] dame name of [?] he got a Filipino helpin her out Saturday [??]. Not for name, thanks, them Flips are a little too handy with knives for me to [hance?] one around. O no. It [?] the [kind?] almost [di?] my girl friend Roxy's ran. He was a [big?] fellow, name of Leon, and he got half blind up North Clark [????] can't along. Roxy just told me. Some Filipino fellow kept countin for Leon when Leon

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[was?] playin - 26, and Leon would get all mixed up, and her he'd [??] another place and try the 26 [?] an [everywhere?] he went [this?] little Flip follered him, rin in' an countin for [him,?] just spoiling for trouble. On account maybe Leon was a [??] was so little, I don't now. Anyhow finally Leon pushed [?] [slu?] him, and the ship butted [????????] didn't even get a little [?] hisself. [?] [lic?] nose clean sliced off and you now, - fun you [????????] a year, [????????] weeks, - [????????] street, [?] walks to the [????????]

[??] a worker for [????] I [??] a spell. I spent my first full week's [owner?] - fourteen dollars - on a pair - [?] and [?] I borrow the money for a [????????] when I got Bruno [benefit?]. [????] an ear and I couldn't get rid of [??]. But it isn't your name make everythin [?] ad, even 12 if he is a bit rough. What keeps you [awake?] night after night looking forwards to Sunday afternoon when you can [?] leaping drunk till Monday morning [a?] men. It aint no man or the cops of the landlady or the Board of Health. It's our company, Your boy-friends. And it don't matter if they're own or old or swells from Winnetka or Polacks from [Chice Av'noo?]. Some if them bargain before they take off their cap and sometimes one 'll toss a roll on the bed and tell you just to help yourself. It don't matter - when they get to you it's enough to turn your stomach sometimes. I've had black and blue marks - the way they [grab ??] know - for a week. That was just from one unmarried high school [punk?] too, he didn't look strong enough to strangle a cat. [??] goes the show you you can't always tell.

Well, I'll tell you [??], miner - it ain't even human to expect a woman to [??] to all the time, not even mentioning [??] an [?] up an [????] a tin slopcan, night after night [????????]. There's men aint fit to [?] that's all. It all they do is [?] all the time, every day, end your kind [????] at a clean [?] that of sleep without [????] without knockin even-and you get [????????] again, - you're real grateful about it and [??] come again sometime? They're the kind buys a [????] them it a real [?] - like waitin for [??] for him. "[How?] did it start, in the first place, 13 sweetheart? The first time - tell [me about?] that. I bet you regret it sometimes now. - d you? [??] he manage it anyhow? Are you sorry? Did you ever [?] of tryin something else, or [?] out of the [?] part of it [??] wit' that "I'm your friend, [?] just look how sorry a for [?] and tell me all." [??] just like in a [?] some fish told me to other day. I told him he was lyin,

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couldn't want to help at all, he wasn't a bit sorry, he [?] [?] "how many kinds of thrills [?] suppose to give you anyhow" I [asked?] him, [????] something to go back and thrill your [?] friends with [?] to buy, a dozen Frenc action pictures [?] of throwing your money anyway on beer for me," I told him.

Well, that's [??] something more. They don't even know themselves [?] it. [?] [puy?] all [?] out, say we [?] do from [????] hoped he had to rest in the boot a minute and have a shot. What more could you give anyone [in that shape?]? Still, he wants more. I tell you, there's no satisfyin men, they want and they want and don't any more than you [?] what they want. They just want. There ain't one of the you [??] satisfy, till he's [?]. And maybe not then for all I know.

[?????] pencils in his vest. One of them came up once. [?????] since, carryin' a tennis racket. [???] fell me even a little. He was [?] from sittin [???] pencil under a somewheres all day, he 14 never even seen no golf links. "All I want to do is talk", he says, Can you feature that? - All he wants do is talk. "Okay honey, that's all right with me, if [?] you come all the way [iro?] [Winuetka?] for. I says "it won't cost, you no less."

[Well?], [I never would ? ???] if I'd of knew what he meant by'talkin. He just wanted to [?] was all, in front of a woman, [??]. [Well, I never?] - I [didn't?] know what he was at. [He?] just stood up and [looked at?] me settin down [?????] [tellin?] me, in a real [?] voice at first, what a thing I was. He [???] unkind, or just [?] me to hear it. I [? maybe?] [?????????] used foul language in his life. But [???] [Collecting it for years, he told me?] [??] I'd never [?] [thought?] of. I [?????????], and then it struck me funny [?????????] poor little monkey. But he [????], so I pretended he was [?] my fellings pretty bad. [?, ??????] ones. It made him a little happy [????] ashamed for him. [?] aint [??] funny - [?????????] he was saying he blushed and [????] sore - but when I looked hurt and [?] - [then?] he [? rid?] of [?] [?] and felt like a real little man. [Well, ??] the [????] I ever earned, but he never came back. [??] it all out of his system, still quiet [?????????] left me an extra fifteen cents [?????] went down the stairs like a real little gentleman.

Do you know what I think? I'd just like to bet you that sometime or other that little fellow is going [??] look me up again. He's just storing it all up [??] little pencil-pushing of his. Only, he won't be able to [?] me, and that kind wouldn't want to [?] a new girl every time. I was his first one to swear at, [??].

Reminds me of a boy, never did learn his name, we just called him [Butch?] and let it go at that. He couldn't have been over twenty and looked like he maybe run off from some college town like they have [?]. He had a fraternity; in and would say things out of books. [??] understand. Bruno, that's Benkowski [??] he was just putting on an act, when the [??] like to hear him say them, [?] a funny. [?] he meant [?]. Bruno said he was [??] so, the [??] [??] reminded [??] [??] of [??] able [??] himself, [??] [??] as friendly, [?].

[??] seen so much money in my life as [?] boy [?] loose. There [??] [??], even made me follow him. I'd [??] one night to the [Y. [?]. [?]. A. [??] [??] where the [??] stay, and the next [??] else. One night he stayed up [??] by the 16 air-field [?] Cicero, watching the big plant coming in. Bruno and me sat in a hamburger joint across [??] to keep an eye on him - [Bruno?] was that [?] he was [??] of them things he couldn't sit still. But say, if I'd [?] alone I would of told him to. I [?] he would of took me up for one of them over-the-loop [?] he was just that kind. [?] I couldn't move, not with that Benkowski around.

He never would [??] a pass at me, he thought me and Bruno [??] wife. [??] - it was time of [??]. 1934, [?] was grateful [??]. [??].

[??] on a business trip", I told him "I'm [?] to be lovely alright." I hated to do it with [??]. And [??]. [??] thirty-three and [??] twenty-two. Then [??] follow him [??].

[????????????] [????????????] [????????????], "You [????????????] [????????????] 17 hooks in him then for fair. Before morning he was telling him how he could get more. And [??] cryin [??] sleeve and promising he would get more, lots more.

Bruno made me take hi to the [?] Smoke Shop, a weed joint over on 19th, and as [??] we were alone after that he began whining and [crying on my neck?]. Then he ripped open the back of his vest, and I [??] hadn't even begun to spend. And it was all stole, it was all stole, every last dollar of it. I told him to put it back real quick, - I was that scared of that much folding money. But he didn't have no place to put it I guess, with his vest ripped all to hell like that, and kept crying on my neck and asking me to take it, to make myself happy, to remember him by, things like that. And I was afraid, there was that much, and afraid not to account of Bruno behind the door. Then he [?] down and begun hugging my knees and I shoved some bills under the pillow, some reason, and Bruno come outplaying [??] husband for fair. I [wish?] I could be sure right not [???] never did catch on it was just the old army [??] over. But he must of, he couldn't have been that green. Bruno [?] took hold of him and they boy went along not saying a word. "[???] with you," Bruno says.

"What did you do with the boy?" I asked Bruno a couple weeks later.

"I put him on a bus back to Memphis," he said, I thought to myself, "that's a likely story."

Right before I got sick I asked Bruno again and he said if I didn't button my pass he'd throttle me for sure. And he would of too. So I kept still. I was afraid even to look in the papers. I got myself to look [after?].

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Maybe he did put the boy on a bus. It's possible. I really didn't have no time to care much way or another, there was something new every day in those days. And [?] got to take of number one you know. You got to be real careful. You got to look after yourself.